

PLANNING AHEAD

Notes for the Planning and Policy Community

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Notes from Jim Johnson

Last year was marked by considerable controversy and a lot of negative press attention. I expect some of that will continue this year despite our best efforts. Nevertheless, we should be pleased with a number of excellent accomplishments last year.

We are continuing to see more projects that effectively balance environmental quality and economic development. While the media have focused on a few contentious projects, these balanced projects represent by far the greatest share of those moving through the system, and yet they do so with little attention.

We also made some pretty significant achievements in other areas. In April, we published our new planning guidance, and reduced it in volume from about 600 pages down to about 60 pages. More importantly, it now reflects a common sense approach to planning; one that relies on a holistic, watershed approach to problem solving while balancing environmental quality and economic development.


Later in the year, we were greatly pleased with the passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. It reflected the confidence placed in the Army Corps of Engineers by both the Congress and the Administration. Through the end of the year, we continued to work in effective partnership, and achieve some dramatic results. We completed a record 127 project cooperation agreements in FY 2000, 20 more than the previous record high of 107. In addition, we completed 24 Chief of Engineers reports to support authorization of \$3.4 billion in civil works projects. Each of these was an exceptional success and indicative of the value of teamwork: vertically between Headquarters, divisions and districts; and horizontally within each office.

In looking forward to 2001, we are excited about the initiatives taken by our new Chief of Engineers, LTG Bob Flowers. His recent letter to Corps employees says it best, and should be read by every Corps employee, partner, stakeholder and public interest group.

In other news, we just completed our MSC Planning Chiefs' Winter 2001 meetings in New Orleans. Special thanks to Mississippi Valley Division and New Orleans District for being terrific hosts for the meeting, and for arranging such an excellent field trip. Our meeting was productive, and we continued to make significant progress on our six highest planning priorities, which I described in the October issue of *Planning Ahead*. I'll provide more details in next month's issue, once I've had an opportunity to brief the Director of Civil Works on our accomplishments.

With continued progress on those six high priority initiatives, the planning function will continue to get healthier; and a healthier planning will also strengthen our civil works program.


Although we will continue to face some difficult challenges, I am very pleased both with the professionalism and capability of our current planning workforce; and with the quality of our recently selected planning leaders – in our districts, our MSCs and *now* at Headquarters. As you will read elsewhere in this issue, we have been approved to fill Planning and Policy positions for the first time in several years; and our first selection is Ms. Robyn Colosimo of Baltimore District as a senior water resources planner in our Planning Management Branch. Also, congratulations to Ken Hitch, who was recently selected as Chief of Planning in the Sacramento District. Ken was most recently the Chief of Planning and Engineering in the New England District, after spending nearly 25 years in Alaska District.

Planning leaders at each level – district, MSC and HQUSACE – will play a major role in guiding the Army Corps of Engineers into the future, and I expect each new leader selection to reflect that important role. If you want to take part in that important role, I encourage you to accept the challenge, and to seek future planning leadership positions, in districts, MSCs and in here in Headquarters. 

Senior Planning Vacancies

We have created this special section in *Planning Ahead* to highlight vacancy announcements for senior planning positions, especially planning chief positions. We encourage all divisions and districts to place senior planner position announcements in *Planning Ahead* to give them greater visibility. Also you can find most vacancy announcements at <http://cpol.army.mil/va/scripts/public.html>

Headquarters – Planning and Policy


We are pleased to announce the addition of Ms. Robyn Colosimo to our Planning and Policy Division staff. Robyn was selected as Senior Water Resources Program Planner, GS-14 for the position vacated by Barry Kennedy. Robyn has a BS in Engineering from Penn State University and a MS in Policy Sciences from the University of Maryland. She has been with the Planning Division, Baltimore District for ten years, serving in increasingly responsible positions as Team Leader, Acting Branch Chief and Acting Assistant Division Chief. Prior to coming to the Corps, she was a project engineer and manager with Progressive Engineering Consultants and with Sverdrup Corporation. Please join us in welcoming Robyn to our staff. 

Project Partnership Kit

Paul Blakey – CECW-PM

We have finished revising the Project Partnership Kit. The Kit has been sent to the Institute for Water Resources and printed copies will be available from the Institute within two months. In the mean time, the Kit is available on the Internet at:

<http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/iwr/Products/reports/reports.htm#planning>

The Kit has several new figures and tables. Figures 5 (Civil Works Project Phases, Funding, Activities, and Documents) and Figure 6 (Generalized Federal Budget Process Overlying Direct Civil Works Program Cycle), are two new tools designed to better explain key elements of the five project development phases (reconnaissance; feasibility; preconstruction, engineering and design; construction; and operation and maintenance) and the Corps budget cycle. 

Mission Planning and Development Update


Rennie Sherman – CECW-PD

This column will provide updates on the interagency and non-governmental partnering activities of the CECW-PD staff, as well as the status of various Planning and Policy initiatives. Suggestions for future topics may be submitted to Ellen Cummings.


Environmental Advisory Board Update

Ellen Cummings – CECW-PD

On 8 January 2001 Forester Einarsen briefed the Chief of Engineers on the Environmental Advisory Board's (EAB) current status and potential future. There are currently five members and the last meeting was in the fall of 1998. The EAB's charter is valid for two years and the last charter was filed 23 February 2000. The objective of the EAB are to advise the Chief on developing policy and procedures, identification/resolution of existing environmental issues within new or expanded Corps missions, and to explore and advise on potential new directions for the Corps. Lt. General Flowers reacted enthusiastically requesting that new members be nominated for appointment almost immediately

to reach the maximum board size of ten. He also stressed a desire that members be individuals with national reputations. Formal nomination packages are being prepared for three candidates and the remaining two positions will be filled at a slightly later date. Nominees from non-governmental organizations may be among those considered. Thank you for your thoughtful candidate recommendations. For additional information contact Forester Einarsen at 202-761-4589. 

Memorandum of Understanding with The Nature Conservancy *Ellen Cummings, CECW-PD*

On 14 December 2000, Dr. Westphal, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The Nature Conservancy is the nation's largest private, non-profit conservation organization. The MOU recognizes the shared commitment of the Corps and TNC to managing water resources in a manner that meets human needs, while also protecting priority species, natural biological communities, and their habitats. The purpose of the MOU is to facilitate effective and efficient management of important biological resources within the context of the Corps' civil works and regulatory missions. The two parties have agreed to cooperate in an effort to seek opportunities to promote the conservation of regionally significant biological diversity in accordance with applicable law for the purposes of carrying out project or programs related to the conservation, understanding, management, and sustainable use of the Nation's land and water resources. HQ staff will be meeting with TNC staff to discuss specifics regarding implementation of this MOU. In the meantime districts are encouraged to look for opportunities to work with TNC on projects of mutual benefit. It is important to note that the MOU is not a fiscal nor a funds obligation document and does not establish authority for the noncompetitive award to TNC of any contract or other agreement. Hard copies of the MOU are being distributed to divisions and districts and it will also be posted on the CECW-P web page in the near future. For additional information contact Ellen Cummings at 202-761-4558. 

Items of Note - On the Web *Ellen Cummings – CECW-PD*

You can click on <http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/usace-docs/> to get to the main publication page and then the "What's New" link to keep track of the new publications. Recent publications of note:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands Status and Trends Report recently released indicates that the rate of wetland loss has been cut by about 80 percent but that the goal of no net loss of wetlands has not yet been met. The report is available at <http://wetlands.fws.gov/bha/SandT/SandTReport.html>.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture also conducts an inventory containing wetlands information. The National Resources Inventory is produced every 5 years and the latest is available at <http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/NRI/>. It should be noted that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture use slightly different criteria when defining wetlands and the rates of loss.

In an effort to address these differences the White House Wetlands Working Group and the Clean Water Action Plan Committee for Defining and Tracking Wetlands Gains and Losses have developed definitions for the terms "create", "restore", "enhance" and "protect" as these terms relate to wetlands. It


is hoped that these definitions will be used by agencies when reporting the wetlands gains and losses in support of the Clean Water Action Plan goal of a net increase of 100,000 acres of wetlands by 2005. These definitions and very useful explanatory examples may be found at <http://cleanwater.gov/conservationcategories>.

<http://envirotext.eh.doe.gov/> is a Department of Energy site that links to the Federal Register, Thomas, Executive Orders, Native American laws and regulations and other environmental sites, including DENIX.

A look into the process of revising the Corps Vision is provided by the documents on the Chief's Transition and Vision page <http://corpsinfo.usace.army.mil/mp/n/50th/>. This includes Drafts of the Capstone document and definitions of interest ranging from "Values" to "Metric".

Summaries of the regional listening sessions the Corps hosted during 2000 regarding America's water resource challenges for the 21st century may be found at <http://www.wrsc.usace.army.mil/iwr/waterchallenges>.

The Environmental Protection Agency has posted a fact sheet regarding the hypoxia action plan at <http://www.epa.gov/msbasin/factsheet.htm>.

If you are aware of a site that may be of interest to others, please send a note with the address and brief description to Ellen Cummings or Harry Kitch. 

Upcoming Meetings

Compiled by Ellen Cummings

Streambank and Channel Stabilization, and Reservoir Water Quality Enhancement Techniques Workshops. The US Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Waterways Experiment Station will conduct three five-day workshops with an interdisciplinary team of engineers and scientists. A variety of technical presentations will include discussions of channel rehabilitation, channel and stream stability, physical and environmental impacts of channelization, bendway weirs, traditional bioengineering and innovative bank protection methods, stream hydraulics, sediment transport, watershed processes and management opportunities, reservoir limnological processes, and water quality management opportunities, in-reservoir and tailwater quality enhancement technologies. Participants will acquire knowledge through classroom lectures, case histories, and field site reconnaissance exercises. Attendees may include Federal and non-Federal planners, engineers, hydrologists and project managers. This workshop was developed under a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water - Nonpoint Source Pollution Program.


Workshop Dates: Vicksburg, MS - February 26-March 2, 2001
 Denver, CO - July 16-20, 2001
 Louisville, KY - August 27-31, 2001

Registration: There is a \$200 non-refundable, but transferable registration fee if registered 30 days prior to the workshop. After that, the registration fee is \$300. The workshop is limited to the first 50 paid registrants. To register for the workshop or for additional information, contact Ms. Laurin Yates at 601-634-3792; Fax 601-634-4158; or e-mail laurin.i.yates@wes02.usace.army.mil. Or visit the web site: <http://chl.wes.army.mil/training/lectures/wqual2001>.

TMDL Science Issues Conference. March 4-7, 2001, St. Louis, MO

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), United States Geological Survey (USGS), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA) and the Water Environment Federation (WEF) are sponsoring this conference 7-4 March in St. Louis, MO. The purpose is to disseminate "Science and Tools" information related to Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Among the topics to be discussed are Water Quality Standards (Criteria), Data Quality/Quantity/Management Systems, Water Body Assessment, Modeling and Tools, Allocation and Watershed Approaches, Implementation, and Public Education and Participation. There is a registration fee. Further information about the Conference is available on the web at: <http://www.wef.org/conferences/tmdl2001/opening.jhtml>.

Assessing the Health of Wetland Life: Policy, Science and Practice. This conference is being presented jointly by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Biological Assessment of Wetlands Workgroup (BAWWG) and the Izaak Walton League of America in Orlando, FL, 14-16 May 2001. The conference is targeted to wetland scientists, water quality specialists, environmental planners, ecologists, and others interested in learning about how the quality and integrity of wetlands can be determined through the assessment of their diverse life forms. Presenters will offer information on techniques and programs that were developed to determine the success of wetland restoration efforts, develop standards for wetland quality, train volunteers to gather water quality information, and design a study method for the monitoring of wetland conditions. Participants will learn how to use information on plants, macroinvertebrates, algae, birds, fish and amphibians to assess wetland and watershed conditions. Registration: Registration will begin in January. For more information, please call (800) 956-5004 or (415) 682-2154. Or visit the EPA web site at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/bawwg/announ2001.html>.

If you are aware of an upcoming meeting that may be of interest to others, please send a note with the address and brief description to Ellen Cummings or Harry Kitch. 

Combined Environmental Remediation Conference and National
Natural Resources Management (NRM) Conference

Norm Edwards – CECW-PD

Northwestern Division and Portland District will host the combined conferences at the Hilton Double Tree Hotels, in Portland, Oregon, April 16 - 20, 2001. The theme of the Conference, "Environmental Stewardship: We Proceed On", is in honor of the Lewis & Clark Expedition that labored to reach the Pacific Ocean. "We proceeded on" was a phrase frequently used throughout the journals of the Expedition, and was thought to be an appropriate theme for the first conference in the new millennium. Look to this web site for up-to-date information: <http://hq.environmental.usace.army.mil/edw2001/#welcome>

A significant goal of the Conference is to provide a forum for exchanging ideas and working toward a better understanding of cross functional areas. To further this goal, the Conference will include some joint sessions and ample breakout sessions. The overall purpose is to exchange information regarding sustainable environmental restoration, natural resource management, and stewardship.


The conference should provide an opportunity for Civil Works planners to associate with the full spectrum of Corps environmental proponents and activities. Please check the website frequently for emerging details regarding schedules and sessions.

To help to round out the conference, the planning community is considering providing the following sessions:

Policy Update

Military – Civil Works collaboration for environmental restoration (likely format to include case studies)

Environmental Sustainability

For further information on Civil Works participation, please e-mail or call Mr. Norman Edwards at norman.t.edwards@usace.army.mil or 202-761-4559. 

New Waterborne Commerce Origin-Destination Database

Jay Wieriman – CEIWR-NDC-C


Nine years (1991-1999) of waterborne commerce tonnages by commodity and origin-destination are now available on CD or Zip drive from the Navigation Data Center (NDC). Origin-destination data include both state-to-state and region-to-region levels of geographic specificity.

States include all those with waterborne commerce as well as special areas such as U.S. territories and foreign to provide completeness. Regions include major river systems as well as sections of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The origin-destination database uses 14 commodity groups such as Coal, Petroleum, and Wood

The expanded Public Domain database contains operators and is therefore limited to Corps and government employees. However, if extracts do not disclose the business of individual operators they may be shared with the public.


Nine years of origin-destination data is especially useful for analyzing trends. For example, the database shows that year to year waterborne commerce fluctuations for the Upper Mississippi River (Minneapolis to the Illinois River) have been primarily a result of shipment variations of Food and Food Products (i.e. grain). These shipments dropped about 1/3 from 1992 to 1993 and took 6 years to recover to their previous levels.

Anyone experienced with creating queries in ACCESS could quickly check to see if the shipments or receipts by a particular state or region were on the rise or fall and which major commodity groups were involved. Additionally one could see if the pattern of destinations for a particular origin (or vice-versa) is shifting over time. Also, the origin-destination pairs for a commodity such as coal could be analyzed to determine the amount that could be shifted to rail if necessary. The impact of a single vessel operator pertaining to discrete origin or destination can be determined from the database.

The expanded Public Domain (origin-destination) database with operators contains 108,112 state-to-state records and 80,970 region-to-region records. Additional tables are included in the database that give the names of the states, regions, commodities, and operators. The database is available in ACCESS97. Different formats as well as greater levels of geographic and commodity specificity can be prepared on a special request basis (e.g. dock-to-dock and five digit commodity levels). Please contact Peggy Galliano (504-862-1424) for a copy of the new CD, zip drive and/or to explore other options. 


“The U.S. Waterway System Transportation Facts” for 2000
Arlene L. Dietz—CEIWR-NDC

Navigation Data Center recently distributed the December 2000 version of **The U.S. Waterway System Transportation Facts**. Additional copies for both internal and public use may be ordered by contacting Joyce Smith at 703-428-9061 or joyce.smith@usace.army.mil. Large-scale versions of the card are found on the NDC web page at www.iwr.usace.army.mil/ndc.

Readers will find a new table this year entitled “Top 20 U.S. Ports Handling Foreign Waterborne In-transits in 1999”. This table identifies major ports that move commerce having a foreign origin and a foreign destination. This tonnage is not included in U.S. foreign trade statistics from the Commerce Department. Two ports, Portland, Maine and Brownsville, Texas have the distinction of having the highest percentage of their total waterborne commodity movements as in-transits. However, the ports of Portland, Maine; New York-New Jersey; Long Beach, CA; Los Angeles, CA; all have the distinction of moving more than 1 million ton in-transit through their ports. For more information on in-transits contact Susan Hassett at 504-862-1453. 


Top 20 Inland U.S. Ports for 1999
Arlene L. Dietz—CEIWR-NDC

The leading U.S. inland water ports and their 1999 domestic commerce in millions of tons are as follows: Pittsburgh, PA (52.9); St. Louis, MO (32.7); Huntington, WV (22.3); Memphis, TN (16.6); Cincinnati, OH (14.3); Louisville, KY (8.8); Vicksburg, MS (6.1); St. Paul, MN (5.3); Albany, NY (5.0); Nashville, TN (4.7); Kansas City, MO (3.9); Mt. Vernon, IN (3.2); Greenville, MS (2.9); Chattanooga, TN (2.8); Guntersville, AL (2.6); Tulsa, OK (2.2); Helena, AR (1.8); Minneapolis, MN (1.7); Hempstead, NY (1.1) and Natchez, MS (.8).

For more information on the 49 inland ports or on all 323 ports handling commercial cargo in 1999 contact Peggy Galliano, at Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, 504-862-1424. The current **Fact Card** also has the top 100 U.S. ports listed and identified as Coastal, Inland or Great Lakes. 

Instructions for Contributors to Planning Ahead

This newsletter is designed to improve the communication among all the planners and those we work with throughout the Corps. We hope that future editions will have mostly information and perspective from those of you on the front lines in the districts. We hope that these notes become a forum for you to share your experiences to help all of us learn from each other. We can't afford to reinvent the wheel in each office. We welcome your thoughts, questions, success stories, and bitter lessons so that we can share them on these pages. The articles should be short (2-3 paragraphs) except in some cases where you just have to say more.

- Use MS WORD, if at all possible
- Use "normal" style
- Use Times New Roman font, 11 point
- All text should be left justified with start of each paragraph indented by one tab stop.
- Each article should have short title with only initial letter of each word capitalized
- Following each title should be author's name and organization
- Last line should be contact information – phone number or e-mail address 

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That single line of text should be: "subscribe ls-planningahead".

If you want to be removed from the distribution list use: "unsubscribe ls-planningahead".

To obtain a 'help' file, send only the word 'help' in the text of the message (nothing in the subject line) and address it to majordomo@usace.army.mil.

The web site for additional information is: <http://eml01.usace.army.mil/other/listserv.html> 

Submissions Deadline

The deadline for material for the next issue is **26 March 2001**

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